

Amendments by Hinchey, Blumenauer, Connolly, Capps and Welch require DoD to study alternatives to reduce wasteful oil convoys that leave troops vulnerable to attack

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) and Reps. Earl Blumenauer, Gerry Connolly, Lois Capps and Peter Welch introduced two amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act to protect our troops on the battlefield and save billions of dollars through energy efficiency. The first (#115) directs the DoD to consider energy efficiency when purchasing warzone structures like tents, which now consume massive amounts of oil that must be delivered along dangerous supply lines. The second (#150) requires the DoD to evaluate combat-zone energy efficiency programs and make recommendations on how to deploy them to further reduce risks to oil supply convoys.

"This is about protecting our troops in the line of duty," said Hinchey. "Ambushes and IED assaults have claimed the lives of thousands of our uniformed men and women who were placed directly in enemy crosshairs as they traveled hundreds of miles to deliver fuel to the front lines. If we can make our military more energy efficient and reduce the number of refueling convoys, we won't just save taxpayer dollars while protecting our environment, we'll also save lives."

"Energy waste on bases in Iraq and Afghanistan is putting our troops in harm's way and costing the Defense Department billions of dollars," said Blumenauer. "Our men and women in uniform are driving fuel tankers hundreds of miles through hostile terrain to deliver fuel that is used inefficiently. There is no doubt that making our bases more energy efficient will save lives and dollars, and these amendments are a step forward towards that goal."

"Our amendment will save lives and tax dollars by eliminating the bureaucratic bottlenecks that have led to purchases of inefficient shelters, more fuel shipments, and loss of American lives in fuel convoys," said Connolly.

"Increasing the energy efficiency of military structures is a straightforward way to improve the safety of our men and women in harm's way and save money for the taxpayer," said Capps. "We know that we need to thoroughly examine the Pentagon's budget as we try to reduce the deficit, and reducing fuel costs is a simple step that we can take to streamline defense spending."

"These are common sense amendments," said Welch. "Transporting fuel in combat zones is difficult, expensive and extremely dangerous. If we can reduce the amount of fuel consumed by our armed forces, we can protect our soldiers and save taxpayers money."

Over 3,000 troops and federal contractors have died in assaults on fuel convoys since the start of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Every extra gallon of fuel that is needed to provide climate control in inefficient tents and power other wasteful base operations endangers our war fighters and contractors who must make repeated journeys in vulnerable fuel convoys. Often these fuel convoys ship liquid fuel over 800 miles to remote bases through terrain that is vulnerable to IED attack or ambushes.

Fuel convoys are deadly for our troops and a huge burden on federal taxpayers: Diesel fuel shipped to Iraq and Afghanistan costs between \$17 and \$400 per gallon, with higher costs in remote regions of Afghanistan. These extremely high per-gallon costs contribute to annual air conditioning fuel costs of \$20 billion in Iraq and Afghanistan. Reducing the amount of fuel needed to cool tents will reduce military vulnerabilities while saving money for taxpayers.

Amendments 115 and 150 to the National Defense Authorization Act of 2012 have been ruled in order and have the support of both the Chair and Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee.